



FEBRUARY 2014

News from your local, Independent Councillor,

MARIANNE OVERTON MBE

Action on your behalf

I have a little money left for community grants if to be spent this month if you would like to let me know what you need before Feb 21st.

The first meeting reviewing the methods of consultation on the core strategy was held recently as the next effort begins. The plan is to engage with the public and consult properly from April on housing, jobs and the environment

The first library consultation meeting in Hormcastle was attended by our residents. The main issue is that funding is only set for four years, though leases are for ten. Also that fund-raising would be needed to support the library. Necessary equipment is not included. The costs of running a proper library appear to be more than the £5,625pa initially available from LCC. For some villages, it may be better to run a book swap and coffee morning, like Coleby.

My meetings in Westminster recently included a visit to no.11 with ministers on "troubled families", an area where Lincolnshire County is taking a lead. Also the team and I have run two conferences so far, designed to inform and inspire councillors to do the best job possible for their residents. Independent Baroness Greengross has put forward amendments for us to improve the bill for care for the elderly - and presented me with a bouquet for my MBE award!

The main national meetings continue, bringing council leaders from across England and Wales together to help improve funding and legislation. Laura Conway and I will attend a parliamentary reception to raise some issues with ministers and MP's.

I met with Police and Crime Commissioners from around the country in Newcastle where we discussed an exemplary project tackling domestic violence and crimes against women and girls, where PCC Vera Baird is taking a lead. On Friday, Lincolnshire PCC Alan Hardwick came to dinner and spoke encouragingly about the drop in crime despite

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the lowest amount of money per head in the country (£114m). He intends to keep his 1100 police officers and press for visibility. He answers to the government directly and to the public.

Next week five cross party lead members from England are meeting in Edinburgh with our counterpart lead councillors from Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. We share good ideas and find common ground where we can work together effectively. Our call for a more Independent Local Government for England was strengthened by drawing on the experience of devolution in other countries of the UK. Wales is now looking to us to see how to start cutting. Scotland gets a bigger portion of our income tax, an issue we are tackling nationally. See Summary: www.independentvoice.org.uk

Budgets LCC and NKDC

Thank you for your ideas on budgets so far. 20 people attended the NKDC budget consultation in Navenby. If you missed it, please do have your say on Feb 6th at NKDC, 11th at Terry O Toole Theatre in Hykeham.

Over the full five years of this government, local government will have received a 44% cut in grant, more than other parts of the public sector, and the pattern is expected to continue. Lincolnshire has the third lowest council tax of any county and North Kesteven is one of the lowest District tax levels. Council tax has been held down for a number of years, below inflation but it is starting to make it very hard to fulfil our statutory duties, which leaves us open to expensive legal challenge, and hardship for people unable to access essential services.

Parish Council Tax

The government no longer gives a grant to cover for people who genuinely cannot pay their council tax so the number of people contributing to council tax is less. This means that a Parish Council seeking the same amount will show on our bills as an increase. As District and County Councils step back, Parish Councils may need to step up to run more of their own services.

Your Opinion Wanted

Do young people count themselves in?

Did you know that more than half of 18 to 24 year olds are not registered to vote? Only 44% of those registered voted in the 2010 election. At the same time, youth clubs close, university fees have tripled, the educational maintenance grant was cut and school transport costs rise.

Compare that to 96% of over 65's being registered, and they vote. There is a reason that winter fuel allowance, free bus passes and free health is there for over 65's.

Democracy only works if people use their vote. If you don't vote, you don't count, and I mean really don't count! If you are not part of the conversation, you are going to be left out.

I am proud of our track record in our Villages. In a straw poll in villages near Gainsborough, I found a third of people not registered!

Feb 5th is national voter registration day. Registering can be done any time with a form from NKDC 01529 414155. A postal vote form might be useful as well, for convenience. Postal votes can be posted back in advance or taken into the polling station on Election Day.

We have a youth Council and send representatives to the national Youth Parliament. In October, we go into schools to talk about issues. Do you know of a school group who would like a visit? Or a young person who would like to visit the Council? I am a qualified teacher and CRB checked.

Branston Biz

We had a brilliant event last week with a very full attendance and lively discussions. The group is thriving, with some big projects in progress. Join us on the last Thursday monthly in the Branston Waggon and Horses. 5.30 for 6pm start. Do come along for an hour or so early evening to meet others, hear some good ideas and encourage local purchasing. See you on 27th February.

Speed Limit Review

I and some colleagues are doing a review of the speed limit policy. We have visited specific sites that are contentious to see how our current policy is applied and how it needs changing. I

took the two highways officers and chairman right round our area, pointing out the issues you have raised. To compare, we also considered Martin, Fulbeck, and Willoughby. I gave a report at a subsequent LCC meeting. I also spoke at a public meeting on the issue in Bourne, giving a comparison of the national and Lincolnshire policies for speed limits and mechanisms for slowing down the traffic. Article available under news on www.lincolnshireindependents.org.uk

Wildlife Watch & RSPB Explorers

Got children interested in wildlife? Please ask for our new calendar and annual picture review.

Information

Help save lives and keep countryside clean

Report Potholes	01522 278070
Report Litter	01529 414155
Adult Concern	01522 782151
Non urgent	Health 111, Police 101

Some February Events

Feb

- 11th Budget consultation. Please come and have your say! Terry o Toole Theatre 7pm
- 7th Women's World Prayer Day, St Chads Welbourn 2pm
- 7th Peter & the Wolf Puppet Theatre Welbourn Vill.Ha.7pm
- 12th U3A Wellingore and District @ Memorial Hall 10am
- 12th Coleby Coffee morning 10.30am
- 12th "Him with his foot in his mouth" Leadenham Vill Ha. Tickets £9/£8 from Hilary 01400 272835 7.30pm
- 15th St Peter's Coffee Morning, Catwalk, Navenby 10.30
- 18th Navenby Archaeology Group "Something big at Spittal" Navenby Methodist Church 7.30pm
- 21st LCC Budget Day, Council Chamber, Newlands 10am
- 22nd Navenby Coffee Morning Methodist Church 10.30am
- 23rd Wildlife Watch Wild-Art Day Welbourn Vill Ha 10am
- 27th Branston Biz at Branston Waggon and Horses 6pm
- 27th NKDC Budget Day Council Chamber Sleaford 5pm
- 28th Big Independent Councillor Event Lincoln Cathedral Centre Local Government Association 10am

March

- 1st Soup and pancake lunch Navenby Methodist Church £4adults /£2children 11.30am and 1.30pm
- 1st Grace Notes Leadenham Vill. Ha. 7.30pm
- 1st Indian night at Potterhanworth Memorial Hall; Mark Suthern on volunteering in India £12 incl. supper for St Andrews Church. Ring Pam 01522 790201 7.30pm

***Best Wishes,
Marianne***

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A few recent events

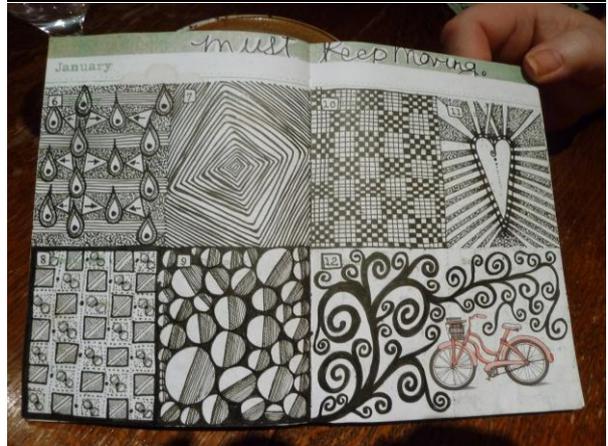


Did you take part in the Great Garden Bird Watch? Washed out on Sunday, so only the big birds were visible in my garden, including a Common Buzzard!



January Wildlife Watch Event at Whisby

Sunset over Leadenham



Do you doodle? For some young people, doodling enables them to sit still in class!



Independent Police and Crime Commissioner for Lincolnshire, Alan Hardwick and I.